

## Christians Chided for Leaving Faith Which They Once Avowed

"Billy" Sunday at the tabernacle last night preached a sermon on the subject of backsliding.

Text—"Thy own wickedness shall correct thee. Thy backsliding shall reprove thee. Know, therefore, and see that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that thy fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Israel."—Jeremiah, 13.

In imagination I have seen a stately ship sailing from port, its decks crowded with passengers. As it moves away from its slip and leaves the foam-flecked tide, the people on board wave signals of farewell, and those on the shore about, "bon voyage!" The waters are calm, the sky is blue above, and all believe that the journey is to be one of profit or delight. But just beyond the harbor the sky blackens and becomes as adamant, the wind rises to a gale and the gale rises to a hurricane, and the waters are lashed into mighty waves and the ship wallows like a monster in distress. The watchman on the bridge cries, "Break ahead!" and the order to change the course, "Hard a-port!" is shouted to the helmsman. But it is too late. The great ship strikes upon the reefs and is lost, and on the next day only the circling gulls that fly about the wreckage tell the story of the vessel gone down with all on board, unwept and ununged.

Many start the voyage of the Christian life under the smiling skies and upon smooth waters, but as they sail out of the harbor the sky becomes dark and the craft of their religion crumbles upon the rocks. At first they are careful to obey the commands of God, but after the revival they neglect their duties and finally come to wreck.

**Reasons for Backsliding.**

A friend of mine holding a meeting, asked how many who were present had been Christians, but were now backsliders. Finally forty "reared up." Then he asked them for the reason for their falling away. Finally a man got up and said he backslided through believing that he could be a Christian and keep his store open on Sundays. A man that keeps his store open on Sundays is an anarchist. I wouldn't buy \$1 worth from him. A young lady arose and said that she backslided because of cards. A friend had given a card party and she had to give one in reciprocity. She said she had invited a young man to attend, but that he didn't know what to do. He came, but when he found out what it was he said he was sorry, but he must go, for he could not stay there. "I admired him for his loyalty to his religion; he made me feel that I wasn't worthy to have my name as a church member," the young lady said.

Another man stood up and said: "I backslid when I voted for the saloon." You bet he did or he wouldn't have voted for that dirty thing. Why, he backslid before he voted that ticket, or he wouldn't have voted it.

A young lady said: "I thought I could be a member of the church and dance." Sure she could. You can be a member of the church and a burglar, too, but not a member of the body of Christ. She said, "I attended a dance and found my desire to pray diminishing. I attended another and I found my desire to pray nearly gone. And then," she said, "my desire to pray disappeared." I tell you I never saw a drinking, dancing, card-playing Christian who amounted to anything. The dance is a quagmire of wreckage. You wait until I get it at.

I'm against a lot of amusements popular among church members, as you people are going to find out before I am through in Omaha. I don't give that (snapping his fingers) whether you like my preaching or not. Understand? It's a question of whether you are interested in decency. If you live wrong you can't die right. Emerson said: "What you are speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say."

People say to me: "Why is it so great a sin if a man, finding himself falling in the Christian life, quits it?" He can find himself falling in business or society and quit with honor—why not in religion? Well, religion is not a business or social enterprise. It is not for time, money, politics, applause of society, but for God. Not every backslider is an apostate, but every apostate is a backslider. Peter was a backslider, but he came back and preached that sermon at Pentecost. Judas was a backslider, and what he did so proved upon his mind that he did not want it. He went out, but he never came back.

I have never taboed but two towns in my life, and one of these was a little town in Iowa, where I once held a meeting. Just before I really became an evangelist, that town had an infidel club of 150 members. There were only two church members in the place, and there was an interrogation point after them at that. They could have started a founding assembly of their own in that community.

**Business and Religion.**

In business life, crises come unforeseen. Hard times come. When they do you may be able to get away with an overdraft at the bank if the cashier doesn't know you too well. At the bank of heaven no check on God's mercy have ever been turned down. If you come with honest heart God will honor the appeal if your hands are red with blood.

There is no man I so love and delight to honor as the man who is true. There is no woman I so delight to honor as the young woman who is true. There is no one I so abhor as a man or woman whose words are untruth and whose word is an unweaving sand. I may differ from a man in politics, religion or business, and if he is living up to his highest ideals, even if I think his ideas or religion are wrong, I respect him and will do my best to clear up the errors and lead him to the higher light through the word of Jesus Christ.

"In a campaign like this, for some little thing many men will sell out. There are men whose honor and manhood hang like meat in a butcher shop, for sale at so much a pound. I thank God, though, that most men are honest and most women are virtuous, and that even the minority can be made to yield when you preach the gospel right."

"God has marked out the same path for both men and for women. Away with the selfish doctrine of a double standard of living in this twentieth century. It makes no difference whether the one who sins wears a plug hat or a petticoat. Young fellow, your sister has as good a right to live as you do, as you have. She has as good a right to walk up street smoking a cigarette as you have. Your wife has as good a right to line up before a bar and hit the booze as you have. She has as good a right to go to the corner grocery in the evening and sit around and put her feet up on the stove and tell scummy stories as you have. Don't you think that because you wear whiskers and

breeches that you are privileged by God. She has as good a right as you have to walk down the street with a half a plug of tobacco sticking out of her mouth and spitting enough to drown a jackrabbit as you have. I wouldn't clean out your old spittoon for you. I'd throw it at your old head. Yes, sir.

"There is many a fellow looking in my face who, if his wife did what he does, would be whining around the courts for a divorce. Man has cut for his own use a pathway below that marked by God, but he insists that his wife keep to the old and higher one.

"God has not one plan for you and another for her.

"I can imagine a man being untrue in business. I can imagine him being untrue in politics. I can even—but it is difficult—imagine him being untrue to the vows made at the altar—but to be untrue to God! Be untrue to God and you will lose heaven and lose all. Be true to God and you will lose hell. I pray that God will so work upon the consciences of you backsliders who hear me that you will cry out tears and turn and roll upon your pillows when you go home tonight and seek a dry spot that He may reproach you until you have been stung into a return to the God to whom you have been false.

**One Fine Woman.**

A heathen woman named Panthea was famous for her great beauty, and King Cyrus wanted her for his harem. He sent his representatives to her and offered her money and jewels to come, but she repulsed them and spurned their advances. Again he sent them, this time with offers still more generous and tempting, but again she sent them away with scorn. A third time she said "No." Then King Cyrus went in person to see her and he doubled and trebled and quadrupled the offers his men had made, but still she would not go. She told him that she was a wife, and that she was true to her husband.

"He said, 'Panthea, where dwellest thou?'"

"In the arms and on the breast of my husband," she said.

"Take her away," said Cyrus. "She is of no use to me." Then he put her husband in command of the charioteers and sent him into battle at the head of the troops. Panthea knew what this meant—that her husband had been sent in that he might be killed. She waited while the battle raged, and when the field was cleared she shouted his name and searched for him, and finally found him wounded and dying. She knelt and clasped him in her arms, and as they kissed his lamp of life went out forever. King Cyrus heard of the man's death and came to the field. Panthea saw him coming, careening on his camel like a ship in a storm. She called, "Oh, husband! He has—no—he shall not have me. Was true to you in life, and will be true to you in death." And she drew her dead husband's ponard from its sheath and drove it into her own breast and fell dead across his body.

"King Cyrus came up and dismantled. He removed his turban and knelt by the dead husband and wife, and thanked his God that he had found in his kingdom one true and virtuous woman that his country could not buy, nor his power intimidate.

"People of Omaha, preachers, the problem of this century is the problem of the first century. We must win the world for God, and we will win the world for God just as soon as we have men and women who will be faithful to God and will not lie and will not sell out to the devil."

**Two Mayors Call On "Billy" Sunday for Old-Time Sake**

Perley Sheldon called on "Billy" Sunday at his hotel Wednesday morning.

Who is Perley Sheldon? Why, you ought to know him. Everybody for miles and miles around Ames, Ia., knows Perley. And lots of people all over the country know him.

He is mayor of Ames for the last quarter century. He is a banker and a land owner and a politician and a statesman. And he's the man on whose farm "Billy" Sunday worked summers when he was a boy.

Perley is about three score and ten now, but still hale and hearty and active in business, politics and human progress. "Billy" Sunday was as happy as a boy with a pocketful of marbles to see Mayor Sheldon. He showed him the apartments of the Sunday party and they had a long visit together.

With Mayor Sheldon of Ames was Mayor Moeller of Davenport. Mayor Moeller of Davenport stated that the revaluation of Davenport property for taxation purposes since the saloons have been blotted out, annihilated and done away with in accordance with the sovereign will of the people, has resulted in giving the city an income of \$25,000 a year more than it had with the saloons. It means the saloon licenses, but the property has increased so much in value as a result of the closing of the saloons that there is that much additional for the city.

**Billyisms**

"I'll bet there are a bunch of people here today who only read the Bible when they are sick."

"The poorest stick in the world to do personal work is a young preacher just out of the seminary."

"Ministers ought to get out and mix a little."

"A lot of you haven't any consciences."

"Keep your feelings buttoned up under your dress and I won't trample on them."

"The devil never gets gout or rheumatism or appendicitis. He is always on the job."

"You can't live half the time with one man and half the time with another and trot square with both."

## Sundayisms at the Tab as Caught by Our Staff Artist

WHAT SUNDAY, WOULD DO—



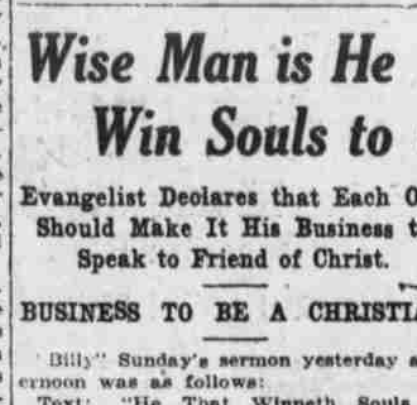
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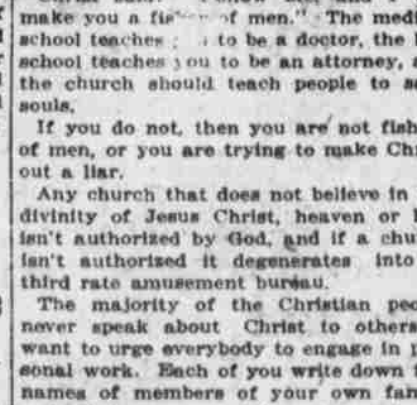
IF "MARTY" SHOULD RETURN



SO CHESTY TAFT'S COAT WOULDN'T MAKE A VEST FOR HIM



BRIGHTEN THE CORNER WHERE YOU ARE



Wise Man is He Who Would Help Win Souls to Christ, Says Sunday

Evangelist Declares that Each One Should Make It His Business to Speak to Friend of Christ.

**BUSINESS TO BE A CHRISTIAN**

"Billy" Sunday's sermon yesterday afternoon was as follows:

Text: "He That Wineth Souls Is Wise."

Christ said: "Follow Me, and I will make you a fisherman of men." The medical school teaches you to be a doctor, the law school teaches you to be an attorney, and the church should teach people to save souls.

If you do not, then you are not fishers of men, or you are trying to make Christ out a liar.

Any church that does not believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ, heaven or hell isn't authorized by God, and if a church isn't authorized it degenerates into a third rate amusement bureau.

The majority of the Christian people never speak about Christ to others. I want to urge everybody to engage in personal work. Each of you write down five names of members of your own family and ask how many of them belong to the church. Some of you may find one or two of that number are church members.

Why are so many people outside the church? The church is at fault. Each of you should be a fisher of men.

That is why we have Christian Science, the holy rollers and so forth. The preachers are chasing rats instead of souls. I like to see people afraid I'll talk religion. That's my business. That's your business. The trouble is the last thing people give to Christ is their tongues.

It's your business to be a Christian. If you are a lawyer you are a lawyer to pay expenses, and your business is to be a Christian. If you are a doctor you are a doctor to pay expenses, and your business is to be a Christian. You work for a living to pay expenses, but your business is to be a Christian.

**Opportunity to Do Good.**

Regard life as an opportunity to do good and bring somebody from sin. Your business is to find the lost. It's not the church's business to educate people. It's their business to save people.

Thousands of college graduates are going as fast as they can straight to hell. If I had \$1,000,000 I would give \$250,000 to the church and \$1 to education. Not that I belittle education, but I believe that it's not intellect, but religion that will save men.

The church's business is to save men from hell thousands who would be caught napping by the devil if they weren't put wise to his dirty tricks. The sooner you get the importance of an evangelical movement through your heads, the better you'll be off.

Not that I have anything against education, but education without prayer is the biggest farce. I think the best education is the knowledge of the Bible.

I'll bet there are a bunch of people here today who only read the Bible when they're sick. I'll bet there are a lot of people here who only pray when they are in need of a doctor.

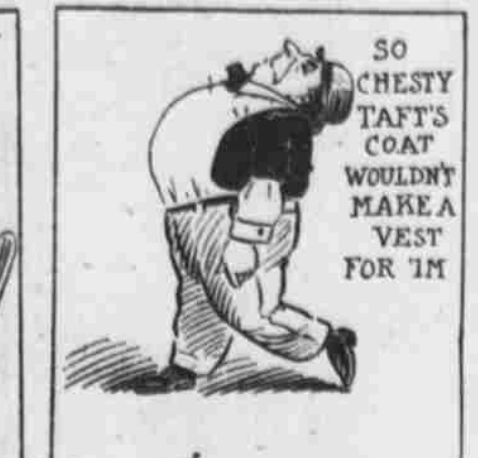
The church is wrong today when it preaches fifty weeks in the year to the church members and two weeks to those outside. It should be two weeks to the church and fifty weeks to the outsiders. And one person can set a church on fire for God.

**Church of the Future.**

I tell you the church of the future must have personal work and prayer. The trouble with some churches is that they think the preacher is a sort of ecclesiastical locomotive, who will snort and puff and pull the whole bunch through to glory.

The poorest stick in the world to do personal work is the young preacher just out of the seminary. Why? Because they minimize and even laugh at personal work in the seminary.

Two-thirds of the theological teachers never had any experience in soul saving. We are preaching people to death. At the prayer meeting the preacher gets up and gives his scripture lesson and maybe one elder or deaconess or somebody makes



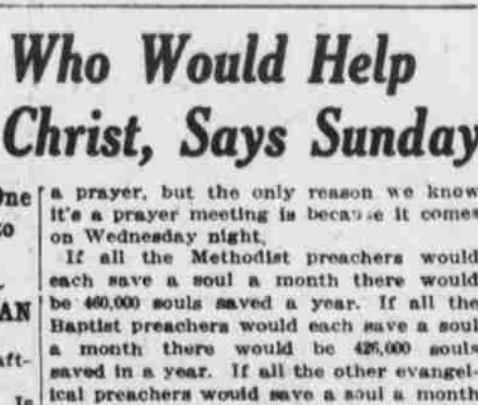
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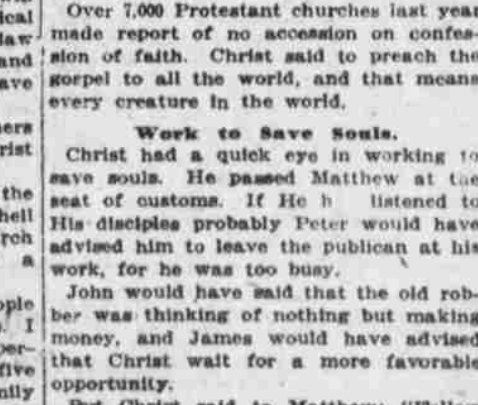
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A lot of you church members try to prove God a liar right there. You go to the theater on Tuesday night, go to the prayer meeting on Wednesday night, go to a dance Thursday night and a card party Friday night, and then on Sunday morning go to church and occupy a space seventeen inches square.

I believe that the Lord allows me as much liberty as a regenerated conscience permits. I'm not talking about your consciences; a lot of you haven't any. I might do something that would hurt me, but I do not believe in doing it if it might lead somebody else to do wrong or make it harder for him to do right.

At Ephesus Paul would not eat meat, because a man told him that it had been used as a sacrifice to an idol and to eat it would make it harder for him to do right.

Paul said: "If meat makes my brother to offend, I will eat no meat." As he slammed it down, a yellow dog grabbed it and ran up the alley with it.

If my playing cards makes it harder for someone else to do right, I'll burn every dirty card in the house. If you are a Christian you will do it, too. If you are not you won't do it.

**May Pass the Collection Plate.**

It's my experience that the church member who won't do personal work has some sin in his or her life. The devil will let you pass the collection plate or anything else, but not personal work.

And every excuse you offer for not doing personal work is of the devil. The Lord will not give you any excuses.

A woman said to me: "Mr. Sunday, you hurt my feelings."

Then don't spread your feelings all over, or it'll be my business to tramp on them. Keep them buttoned up under your dress!

I got a letter from a man in Chicago who had been trustee of a church, and they elected somebody else to the position. He was going to quit the church because they had elected another man trustee.

The idea! Some people are so touchy, I don't see how some preachers keep their patience trying to handle them.

**Who Is the Wise Man?**

Who is wise? You say the millionaire is wise, the mayor, the judge, the governor, the educator, the superintendent of schools, the principal of the high school, the people who don't worry and live their lives for pleasure, the inventor.

But what does the Lord say? The Lord says: "He who winneth souls is wise." God says to others: "You fool!"

If you are a Christian you are wise; if you are trying to do right you are wise; if you believe there is a God you are wise; if you don't you are a fool.

You will all pass away. Look how the great men of other days have passed away. "But he that winneth souls is wise. He shall shine as the stars forever and ever."

Suppose I had an invention to make gold out of ashes. I would have no trouble to float a stock company to back me, because the stockholders would make fabulous fortunes.

But I have something greater. What is it? Jesus Christ and salvation. Then why don't you go to people and talk about it?

**Many People Like Squirrels.**

I believe that lack of efficient personal work is one of the curses of the church today. The people of the church are like squirrels in a cage. Lots of activity, but accomplishing nothing. It doesn't require much wisdom to get a man's money. Out in Chicago the get-rich-quick schemes rob the people of \$2,000,000 a year. If I had the money that has gone out of Omaha for these schemes I'd be able to pay the expenses of a dozen revival meetings like this.

But I can't sing, everybody can't

preach, but everybody can talk to somebody about Christ. They tell me there are 10,000 people in Omaha. You can get 10,000 in this tabernacle.

You say what big crowds are coming to the meetings. So they are, but what about the other 10,000? Many people won't come and hear me, but you can touch them with personal work.

**Devil Always on the Job.**

The devil never gets gout, rheumatism or appendicitis. He's always on the job.

"Playing cards don't hurt me," you say. God pity you; it sends thousands of souls to hell, and for decency's sake can't you give it up?

You can't live half the time with one man and the other half with another, and trot square with both of 'em.

God's disgusted with you and so is the devil; and when the devil and the Lord both pass you up, you're up against it.

You'd just as well be millionaires in grace as to be hoboes counting the ties over God's division.

Don't spread your feelings all over the tabernacle if you don't want me to step on 'em.

We can't all preach and we can't all sing. If I'd sing you'd all go out through the windows and if I'd sing you'd follow suit.

I can sing but two tunes. Like General Grant, of whom it was said, he sang all his songs to two tunes. One of them was "Yankee Doodle" and the other wasn't.

It's my experience that the church member who won't do personal work has some sin in his or her life. The devil will let you pass the collection plate or anything else, but not personal work.

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